



A safe home is in your hands.

Preventing Drowning Deaths Outside and In-Home

According to *The State of Home Safety In America™* report drowning is the fifth leading cause of unintentional injury and related death. Drowning incidents may involve any source of standing water, including swimming pools, spas, buckets, bathtubs and toilets.

“Drowning is a sudden and silent danger,” says Meri-K Appy, president of the Home Safety Council. “Since drowning victims do not make any noise once in distress, constant supervision around any body of water is critical and the best method of prevention.”

The Home Safety Council urges families to take the following basic safety precautions around water outdoors and in-home.

Swimming Safety and Pool Security

Many drowning incidents involve swimming pools and spas. Adopt the following guidelines from the Home Safety Council to help keep your pool area safe:

- Always practice constant adult supervision around any body of water. Older children should not be left in charge of younger children in the pool area.
- Install four-sided fencing that isolates the pool from the home. Four-sided pool fencing is proven to be an effective drowning prevention intervention. While many communities have codes or regulations that require some form of pool fencing, there is not a consistent national standard.
- Pool fencing should be at least five feet high and have self-locking and self closing gates.
- Position gate latches out of the reach of young children.
- Never prop the gate open or disable the latch.
- Clear debris, clutter and pool toys from the pool deck and adjoining pathways to prevent falls.
- Keep a cordless, water resistant telephone in the pool area and post emergency numbers near the pool area.
- Enroll non-swimmers in swimming lessons taught by a qualified instructor. Pediatricians recommend that children ages 5 and older learn how to swim.
- Never swim alone. Even adults should always swim with a buddy.
- Learn and practice the basic lifesaving techniques, including First Aid and CPR. Insist that anyone who cares for your children learn CPR.
- Keep poolside rescue equipment and a cordless, water resistant telephone close to the pool area.
- Post emergency numbers and CPR instructions near the pool area.

In-Home Water Safety

Water presents a serious hazard both inside and outside the home. Young children are especially vulnerable to drowning risk areas inside the home including toilets, bathtubs and five gallon buckets. Constant supervision is the most effective way to keep children safe around water at home, and the Home Safety Council recommends implementing additional safety precautions to keep your children away from potential water hazards.

- Always stay within touch supervision when your children are around standing water at home. This includes buckets, bathtubs, toilets and spas.
- Always supervise young children during bath time. Never allow older siblings to supervise in or around standing water.



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- Baby bath seats are not a safety device and should never substitute for adult supervision.
- Never leave standing water in a bathtub.
- Keep bathroom doors closed and use door knob covers to prevent young children from accessing bathrooms.
- Use toilet seat locks and keep toilet lids shut.
- Be sure all buckets are emptied immediately after use and turned over with the opening face down.
- Store large buckets upside down and out of children's reach.

For additional information and resources to help you learn more and stay safe in and around your home, please visit www.homesafetycouncil.org.